

Hazard Alert

Wood Chippers

“A piece of wood got stuck, and he tried to clear it out,” said a witness. “But he got pulled in. He yelled, ‘Help me! Help me!’ But the other worker couldn’t turn the machine off in time.”



Injury Statistics (1992-2002)

UNITED STATES

- ▶ 31 work-related deaths
- ▶ an average of 204 injuries per year
- ▶ an estimated total of 155 amputations

NEW JERSEY

- ▶ 3 documented fatalities
- ▶ at least 52 serious injuries



Follow these simple work practices.* They can save your life!

Training

- ▶ Take part in training for safe work procedures. Learn chipper safety devices and controls.
- ▶ Read warning labels on machines. Different models have different features.

Pre-operation

- ▶ Wear close-fitting clothes, gloves without cuffs, trousers without cuffs, and skid-resistant footwear. Keep clothing tucked in.
- ▶ Wear a hard hat, eye protection, and hearing protection.
- ▶ Make sure materials to be chipped are free from stones, metal, and other foreign objects even if the chipper is equipped with a curtain.
- ▶ Close and latch the hood covering the chipper knives before starting the machine.
- ▶ Check the area around the wood chipper for tripping hazards.

***These recommendations are not intended to cover all aspects of safe work practices. For more information, visit our Web site or call us (see below).**

Operation

- ▶ Use the “buddy system”: while one worker is feeding materials into the in-feed hopper, another worker should remain stationed at the feed wheel control bar.
- ▶ Feed brush and limbs into the in-feed hopper butt end first.
- ▶ Put short materials on top of longer materials while feeding the chipper. Use a push stick to force short or thorny brush into the chipper.
- ▶ Always feed small pieces first to open the feed wheels. Follow with large pieces.
- ▶ Don’t load small raked-up materials like twigs and leaves into the chipper.

**Focus on the job.
Always use common sense.**

Machine Safety

- ▶ Use chippers equipped with a “kill switch” that is easily accessible to workers.
- ▶ Never stand or sit on any part of the chipper while the chipper is in operation.



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The New Jersey Department of Health & Senior Services, in conjunction with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, is currently conducting a research study of fatal work-related injuries. This project, known as FACE (Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation), seeks to identify the factors that contribute to work-related injuries. The FACE study will help in the development and use of improved safety measures for preventing injuries.

We hope you find this bulletin informative and that you will share it with others. If you have any comments or questions, or need additional copies of this bulletin, please call the FACE Project at (609) 984-1863.

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www.state.nj.us/health/eoh/survweb